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AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES AND THE ROLE OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING:

THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

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A. INTRODUCTION

The efforts of African governments to lay the foundations for the implementation of the Lagos Plan of Action were thrown off gear by the severe conditions of economic and social decline which culminated in an unprecedented socioeconomic crisis in 1984. The African Heads of State and Government had committed themselves to achieving food selfsufficiency within the continent by 1985. The achievement by that year was a food crisis in Africa with 27 food-aid dependent countries and a regional food requirement shortfall of 3.3 million tons. The short-term objective of attaining at least 1 per cent of world industrial production by 1985 and laying the foundations for the development of the basic industries in Africa were also taken off course. In 1985, the challenge to African industrialization policies was to keep existing industries afloat and to seek ways and means of grappling with declining rates of capacity utilization which had fallen by more than 50 per cent in some African countries. As concerns natural resources development, the Lagos Plan of Action had set itself the noble objective of formulating measures that would eventually allow African governments to exercise sovereignty over the exploration, processing, exploitation and conservation of their natural resources. But by 1985, drought and desertification had ravaged huge chunks of Africa's natural environment, severely affecting woodlands, farmlands, forests, rivers and lakes; and a hostile international economic environment made sovereignty over the exploitation and use of mineral resources a distant dream. Objectives to develop and better utilize Africa's human resources were not to be met effectively by 1985. By that year, an estimated 40,000 skilled Africans had been forced to flee the oppressive social and economic conditions imposed by the crisis, to seek refuge in more enabling environments in the developed world. Institutions of education and training, starved by the harsh financial and economic conditions prevailing had declined in qualitative terms; and an estimated 22 million persons were openly unemployed while some 96 million were underemployed. In the field of transport and communications, the Lagos Plan of Action had envisaged measures to develop infrastructures with a view to facilitating the integration of the region and enhancing intra-African trade. However, the drought and famine of 1984 dictated a shift of emphasis when it became clear that national transport and communications infrastructures were so poorly developed that it was difficult to even bring food and other relief items to reach the drought- and famine-stricken in remote areas. The impact of the world recession and the ensuing protectionist policies adopted by governemnts of the developed world, on African terms of trade, the ensuring foreign exchange problems exprienced by many an African country and the deliterious effects of these on development financing, underscored the region's deep dependence on external markets for sustenance, and vindicated the Lagos Plan of Aciton it its call to remove within-region trade barriers to facilitate the development of intra-African trade, and to diversify Africa's present trade patterns both structurally and geographically. Above all by 1985, the consequences of the social and economic crisis in Africa amplified the need for all African countries to work in concert to reach the long-term goal of an African common market by the year 2000.

By 1985, it had become apparent that in the implementation of the Lagos Plan of Action and the Final Act of Lagos, African countries had taken one step forward and two steps back. The Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU at its 21st session in July 1985, conceded that "five years after the adoption of the Lagos Plan of Action and the Final Act of Lagos, very little progress has been achieved in the implementation of the Plan and the Act".1/ They accepted with candour that "if most of the measures recommended in the LPA had been implemented, the ravaging effects of the current world recession and drought on African economies would have certainly been minimized."2/ The Heads of State and Government attributed this to the difficulties encountered in changing the economic structures inherited from colonialism, the prevailing unfavourable international economic conditions, and the pursuit of national development policies that have tended to perpetuate, if not reinforce these economic structures and relationships; the weakness of Africa's skilled manpower base and the resultant inability of Africa's human resources to internalize the development process; serious structural problems such as the outward orientation of African economies, insufficient internal complementarities and a narrow economic base; and the emergence of unforeseen adverse factors such as the natural disasters that Africa lived through in the first few years of the 1980's. The fact is that the way these factors combined with internal national difficulties, weakened the African economy to a point that it needed first to be rehabilitated in order to be able to move towards attaining the goals of the Lagos Plan of Action. In other words, development priority for Africa was to institute short and medium-term measures to first achieve economic recovery and full rehabilitation as a precondition for the implementation of the Lagos Plan of Action.

To this end, the 21st ordinary session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity convened in Addis Ababa in July 1985 and decided on the medium- and short-term priorities required during the period 1986-1990 to revive the African economy and pave the way for national and collective self-reliance and selfsustained growth and development of the African economies. These measures are detailed in Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery, 1986-1990. The Priority Programme (APPER) doubled up as the framework within which another important document, Africa's Submission to the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Africa's Economic and Social Crisis, was adopted by the First Extraordinary

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1/ OAU: Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery, 1986-1990, 21st Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU, Addis Ababa, 1985 P.4.

2/ Ibid., P.3.

Meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers and the 15th Extraordinary Session of the OAU Council of Ministers, held during 28-29 and 30-31 March 1986 respectively, and presented to the 13th Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly, held in May/June 1986, which was entirely devoted to a discussion of Africa's economic and social crisis. The African Submission translated APPER into an actionoriented programme. It outlines actions that are required to launch Africa into a process of economic rehabilitation, recovery and development. It recognizes that such a process calls, not only for determined and purposeful concerted African actions, but also for joint co-operative actions between Africa and the international community. It quantifies the resources required for the action programme, estimates what Africa can provide and calls on the international community to provide the rest to enable africa to achieve its objectives. The 13th Special Session of the UN General Assembly unanimously adopted the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, 1986-1990 1/ (UN-PAAERD), which is largely based on the African Submission. The UN-PAAERD is essentially a compact or shared partnership in which "Africa is commited to provide the necessary framework to launch long-term programmes for selfsustaining socio-economic development and growth" and the "international community is committed to assist Africa in achieving this objective". Based on this partnership, the UN-PAAERD details the specific actions that are required from African countries and the international community to bring about a lasting process of development in the continent as well as the mechanisms that are required at all levels to ensure the successful implementation of the Programme and to follow-up and report on the process of implementation.

This paper will review the new set of short and mediumterm priority measures and actions identified for Africa's recovery and development during 1986-1990 as outlined above, with a view to defining the role of Africa's institutions of higher learning in the implementation of these measures.

B. MEDIUM-TERM PRIORITIES FOR RECOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT, 1986-1990

(a) Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery, 1986-1990 (APPER)

The 20th ordinary session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU, held in Addis Ababa from 12 to 15 November 1984, adopted APPER and decided to concentrate on the Programme during 1986-1990 "to pave the way for national and collective self-reliant and self-sustained growth and development".2/ While APPER is firmly and incontrovertibly rooted in the Lagos Plan of Action, it addresses itself principally to achieving a breakthrough in structural transformation by focussing on a few sectors, the pivot of which

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1/ United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, 1986-1990, General Assembly, A/RES/S-13/2, 13 June 1986.

2/ OAU: APPER op.cit. P.1

is the agricultural sector during 1986-1990. Thus, food and agriculture commands top priority, followed by industry, human resources, science and technology, transport and communications and trade and finance. These latter sectors are to facilitate the structural transformation of the agricultural sector.

Top priority is accorded to food and agriculture for very obvious reasons. This sector must be developed to serve as the pivot of development in Africa, generating growth in the other economic sectors and serving as the hub of self-reliance and self-sustenance for the continent. A decimated agricultural sector can only guarantee the persistent dependence and underdevelopment of the continent. To rehabilitate this sector, food production must be increased through the elimination of the food crisis. This, APPER emphasizes, can only be achieved through the institution of effective early warning systems; the setting in place of effective mechanisms to take emergency measures to tackle drought or other adverse climatic conditions; the adoption of incentives policies for increasing agricultural production and productivity; increasing and strengthening agricultural institutions and infrastructure; developing and utilizing more efficiently Africa's water resources; improving agricultural production information systems; developing animal and fisheries production; and preserving forest resources. To achieve these, certain structural reforms are called for and action is required to strengthen agricultural research and development; improve training of agriculturists, agronomists and agricultural extension personnel; increase areas under cultivation; pursue rural development with greater vigour; and foster among Africans a greater propensity to consume local products.

APPER recognizes that if the food and agriculture sector should be developed effectively, substantial support must be given to other contiguous sectors. These include transport and communications, particularly rural and access roads improvement to increase efficiency in food distribution and marketing; industry, for the production of agricultural tools and equipment; energy, to assist in the modernization of agricultural production and assist rural development; special education, training and research programmes for the food and agriculture sector.

A special set of measures are recommended for combatting drought and controlling desertification. These include the drawing up of national drought and desertification control plans, public education on drought and desertification, the establishment of a North African green belt, and the drawing up of an international hydrological map for Africa.

The development and utilization of human resources is also given prominence. APPER asserts that "the attainment of the objectives of the LPA and the FAL depends, in the final analysis, on the development of a wide range of human resources required for the formulation, implementation and monitoring of

programmes covering the entire spectrum and sectoral activities in the economic development process".1/ Accordingly, it recommends action to better plan Africa's manpower development, improving education and training systems and instituting measures that would reduce the brain drain from the continent and ensure a much better utilizatoin of Africa's human resources.

In the field of science and technology, APPER stresses that "no country has attained any break-through in its economic development without the development of its science and technology base."2/ It goes on to propose measures to develop national science and technology programmes; to strengthen mechanisms for the development of science and technology, for R + D and for co-operation within the region.

APPER also makes provisions for the development of transport and communications and for improving trade and finance within the region. In the area of trade, African Governments are urged to increase intra-African trade and to institute measures to strengthen domestic trade. As concerns finance, APPER calls for an increased use of existing clearing-house facilities and for the development and integration of existing arrangements into an eventual African payments union. Efforts to establish the African Monetary Fund should also be intensified.

Measures are recommended for intra-African co-operation in the exploration, exploitation and development of energy technologies and equipment, for setting up of institutional machineries to monitor the implementation of energy policies and for evolving programmes of training and research in energy development.

Special attention is given to Africa's external debt and measures to tackle the continent's debt problems are recommended for implementation on short-, medium- and long-term bases. These measures touch on the need to establish national machineries for debt monitoring and management; draw up an inventory of all external debt contracted by the state, public parastatal and private institutions; control external borrowing; pursue development investment policies that would minimize demands for foreign exchange. African countries should also step up co-operation in this area by inter alia recycling net reserves within the region; encouraging indigenous investors; strengthening regional payments and clearing arrangements in order to increase intra-African trade; reducing the need for foreign exchange and thus the need for external borrowing; promoting the local production of goods and services and the establishment of joint production ventures.

APPER recognizes the need for all African Governments to agree on a common platform for action to revitalize sub-regional and regional economic

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1/ APPER, op.cit., P.8

2/ Op.cit., P.8

co-operation for the recovery of the economic situation of Africa".1/ It defines the areas of priority action at the sub-regional and regional levels. These call for co-operation for the implementation of the Special Programme of Action for the Improvement of the Food Situation and Rehabilitation of Agriculture in Africa; increased co-operation in the field of transport and communications, and for the rapid implementation of projects under the United Nations Transport and Communications Decade for Africa and the Industrial Development Decade for Africa Programme. Special measures are recommended for co-operation in the development of trade and finance, science and technology and human resources. These call for harmonization of policies within the region and the greater use of African experts in development projects.

Finally, APPER noted that "it is first and foremost incumbent upon Africa itself to define conditions and assume direct responsibility for the rehabilitation of its economy."2/ However, in view of the serious deterioration of the African economy in the last several years, it would be difficult for African countries to undertake single-handed, all that is required to achieve full economic recovery and rehabilitation. Accordingly, the African Heads of State and Government called for the convening of a Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly to discuss the critical economic situation in Africa and solicit the support of the international community in the implementation of the Priority Programme.

In response to this call, the Special Session of the General Assembly was convened from 27 May to 1 June 1986. Africa presented its case in a document entitled "Africa's Submission to the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Africa's Economic and Social Crisis". The main aspects of this Submission will be reviewed in the following section.

(b) Africa's Submission to the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Africa's Economic and Social Crisis

The Submission stresses that the severe and prolonged drought, which ravaged Africa during 1983-1985, had merely accentuated Africa's more pervasive and structural problems and that unless the fundamental factors underlying Africa's economic and social crisis are attacked at the root through durable and long-term structural transformation, Africa will remain the sick child of the international community. The Submission goes on to explain that the underlying causes of Africa's underdevelopment are the lack of structural transformation and the pervasive low level of productivity, aggravated by exogenous and endogenous factors. The endogenous aggravating factors "include the structural imbalances evident in the great disparities in urban and rural development and in income distribution, the divergent trends in birth and death rates,

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1/ APPER, op.cit. P.34

2/ Ibid.

the inadequacy and/or misdirection of human and financial resources, inappropriate economic strategies and policies, poor economic management, institutional and physical infrastructural inadequacies, political instability and the prevalence of social values, attitudes and practices detrimental to development."1/ Among the more serious aggravating exogenous factors are "the international recession, the collapsing commodity prices, adverse terms of trade, the decline of ODA in real terms, increased protectionism, high interest rates and the heavy burden of debt and debt servicing obligations of African countries."2/

The Submission recognizes that nothing short of a fundamental restructing of the African economies coupled with the necessary policy re-orientations and reforms could save the African economies from collapse and that the first step towards this calls for full commitment to the implementation of APPER. The Submission also stresses that the task of structural transformation also calls for a new approach to development assistance and hence proposes that a "new set of relationships - a compact - be forged between Africa and the international community which will be built around the principle of partnership in which massive support for Africa will be strengthened by the growing determination on the part of the African people and their Governments to pull themselves up by their own bootstraps through the making of exceptional sacrifices in mobilizing domestic resources, to optimize the efficient use of such resources and to back all these up with appropriate adjustments. On their part, the international community will commit themselves to a new approach in their co-operation with Africa which will be based partly on substantial increases in the flow of highly concessional resources and, no less important, to putting in place essential economic policy measures which will enhance the capacity of Africa in its efforts to mobilize its domestic resources and will considerably ameliorate those exogeneous factors"3/ described above.

On the side of African countries, the Submission pledges to implement APPER and in particular undertake the following national, subregional and regional actions.

(i) to create and sustain national emergency preparedness capacity, particularly through the institution of effective early warning systems and national food security arrangements to cope with future emergencies and catastrophies;

(ii) to substantially increase investments in agriculture in order to raise levels of production and productivity. The estimated total investments of US$57.4 billion will be used to increase food

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1/ Africa's Submission to the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Africa's Economic and Social Crisis, P.12.

2/ Ibid.

3/ Africa's Submission, op.cit. P.14.

production, develop and improve arable lands, develop animal and livestock production, increase mechanization of agricultural production, improve storage and marketing, develop agricultural research and extension services, strengthen water resources management and intensify programmes of reafforestation and drought and desertification control. Appropriate policy support will be given by way of better incentives and credit schemes, more realistic producer prices, more agricultural R & D and more efficient distribution and marketing systems;

(iii) to develop other sectors in support of agriculture. These include the rehabilitation and development of agro-based industries to allow for the production of more and better agricultural tools and equipment, fertilizers and pesticides, spare parts etc.; the development of transport and communications to allow this sector to lend support to agricultural production, distribution and marketing, the development of intra-African trade, and the physical integration of the region and the diversification of trade structures in terms of both commodities and markets with a view to developing domestic, and promoting intra-African trade;

(iv) to tackle the problem of drought and desertification by undertaking afforestation and reforestation programmes on a massive scale, developing water resources, protecting common eco-systems and developing alternative sources of energy to replace woodfuel;

(v) to improve the management of the African economy by raising the efficiency of public management systems, institutions and practices with particular attention being paid to management of public enterprises, financial management, optimizing the use of resources, the reduction of foreign exchange leakages and the better management of foreign debt and external assistance.

(vi) to adopt comprehensive policies aimed at better planning, developing and utilizing human resources, particular attention being given to the need for a radical change in the educational system to ensure that the skills, knowledge and attitudes relevant to development are produced and that human resources are better utilized in enabling socio-political environments that would promote efficiency and reduce the brain drain.

The African Governments also undertake to strengthen their social and economic institutions to make them more responsive to the challenges of development, consolidate African co-operation; and institute other policy reforms that may be required for structural adjustment and economic recovery.

The Submission calls for support for APPER on the part of the international community. The Submission requires that the international community:

(i) shows "commitment to a common point of reference" in order to accept APPER as the basis for the reordering of assistance programmes. This acceptance is necessary "to enable the compact between Africa and the international community to have a universal basis for joint programming, elaboration of policy frameworks and other arrangements for the recovery of the African economies and their eventual transformation";

(ii) improve the co-operation structures and environment by shifting from project to programme support in the identified priority areas; using more African expertise in programme development and implementation; strengthening the co-ordination of aid policies; instituting mechanisms for monitoring donor commitments and the disbursement of aid; reviewing the effectiveness of technical assistance in Africa;

(iii) improve the external environment which aggravated Africa's economic problems by adopting policies that are conducive to growth rather than contraction of the world economy; removing protectionist policies that restrict the entry of African products in important markets; changing trade policies that constrain Africa's export and diversification programmes; developing structures that would set fair and remunerative prices and stabilize the earnings of African exports; providing support to African countries in the processing, marketing, distribution and transportation of their export commodities;

(iv) agree on measures that would alleviate Africa's heavy debt burden which constraints Africa's chances for full economic recovery by converting ODA debts and interest obligations into grants; converting debt and debt-service payments during the life of APPER into long-term loans repayable over 30-40 years on concessional terms with a grace period of 10 years; improving the existing framework for commercial debt renegotiation; increasing the concessionality of resource flows to Africa;

(v) support Africa's policy reforms by increasing non-project aid especially balance-of-payments support; easing procurements requirements and administrative procedures in order to speed up disbursement of assistance; increasing aid budgets; and depoliticising aid;

(vi) support APPER financially by filling the resource gap between what African countries will mobilize domestically to implement the priority programme - US$16.5 billion per annum - and the total resources required - US$25.6 billion i.e. an annual contribution to APPER of US$9.12 billion, or US$45.6 billion over the five-year period;

(vii) in addition to providing the amounts required to fill the resource gap, ensure that the external factors that worsened economic conditions in Africa particularly the heavy debt and debt servicing burden will not make it impossible to fully implement the recovery programme, by providing resources in the form of grants or on concessional terms to cushion the impact of debt repayment commitments and more specifically by providing between US$23.7 billion and US$33.6 billion not only to ease debt and debt-servicing obligations of African countries but also to cover the foreign exchange requirements of APPER which are estimated at US$9 billion.

The Submission also amplifies areas of concern to the various subregions and to groups of countries within the region:

(i) drought and desertification: these climatic and ecological conditions affect all the countries in the Sahel plus the Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Mozambique, Botswana and Lesotho. The problems of drought and desertification with which these countries are faced make it difficult for them to implement their recovery programmes effectively, particularly the attainment of food self-sufficiency. The priority areas of action for these countries are afforestation and re-afforestation, the development of water resources, new sources of energy, and new droughtresistant crops.

(ii) the island nations like Seychelles, Mauritius, Madagascar, Comores face difficulties of communications with the mainland countries. Their special need is the development of transport and communications links with mainland Africa. They also have to contend with periodic natural disasters such as typhoons, cyclones and floods. Action will be required to give them added protection against these natural disasters.

(iii) the problem of being land-locked also pose particular difficulties to some countries in east, southern and central Africa. Provision of access to ports in neighbouring countries and to transit facilities would greatly assist in developing their trade potentials;

(iv) The least developed countries, some of which are drought-prone or landlocked, also need programmes in agricultural research to develop high-yield seeds, to diversify crops and to control pests, and livestock and animal diseases.

(v) the countries of southern Afirca face the serious problem of political and economic destabilization posed by the acts of aggression form the racist South African regime. They need programmes to increase their resilience against these acts of aggression and to reduce their dependence on South Africa for goods and services, money and finance.

The Submission also has a section dealing with the National Profiles (volume two, part I). These profiles were drawn up on the basis of information collected by joint OAU/ECA missions which visited every member State. Each country profile gives a short review of overall economic performance since 1980; describes the main areas of focus of the national recovery programme; highlights policy reforms in support of the programme; estimates resource requirements for full implementation of the Programme, showing how much has been or is planned to be mobilized domestically and externally, an estimate of total available resources and the expected resource gap which will be filled through assistance from the international community. Constraints of debt servicing during the period of programme implementation are also quantified in dollar terms in the profiles.

Areas of priority in which support is called for within the programme are:

(i) agriculture
(ii) other sectors in support of agriculture
(iii) drought and desertificaiton
(iv) human resources development

The total cost of the programme is US$128.1 billion of which 44.8 per cent or US$57.4 billion goes to agriculture; 46.9 per cent or US$60.1 billion to other sectors in support of agriculture; 2.7 per cent or US$3.4 billion to drought and desertification; and 5.6 per cent or US$7.2 billion to human resources development. Of the total cost of APPER, US$82.5 billion will be mobilized domestically by African Governments, whereas the rest, some US$46 billion, should be funded by external assistance.

However, the Submission acknowledges that these massive amounts of resources will only produce the desired results if certian adjustment policies are undertaken. In agriculture, these include the provision of incentives to producers; improvements in the provision of economic, social and administrative services to the rural sector; a more generous provision of inputs into agricultural production; removal of technological and institutional bottlenecks; improvement in the performance of public marketing agencies, co-operatives and private entrepreneurs in agriculture.

For industry to support recovery in agriculture, a set of measures are proposed to increase installed capacity utilization. These include the allocation of more foreign exchange to industries, incentives to entrepreneurs to increase exports and protection of locally produced goods.

Domestic resource mobilizaiton needs to be improved and budgetary and fiscal policies and practices would have to be redesigned to improve resource mobilizaiton and use. The improvement of overall financial management capabilities is also important if the objectives of APPER are to be attained.

Other stringency measures have to be adopted to curb public spending such as reducing the size of public sector employment, wage and salary freezes etc., and measures have to be adopted to increase savings.

The Special Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations responded to Africa's Submission on the Economic and Social Crisis by adopting the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 (UNPAAERD). The following section highlights the main strands of the UNPAAERD.

(c) United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, 1986-1990 (UN-PAAERD)

The UN-PAAERD agrees with the analysis of the critical economic situation made by the African Governments in the Submission to the Special Session of the General Assembly. The international community acknowledges that "the vulnerability and the fragile nature of the African socio-economic structures have now become fully apparent as a consequence of the dramatic effects of drought. The African Governments have initiated actions aiming at long-term structural transformation of their economies which is vital for breaking the vicious cycle of poverty and underdevelopment and for paving the way for self-reliant economic development. Notwithstanding past efforts, it is imperative that the international community intensify its co-operation and substantially increase its support for the African effort."1/ They concede also that the recent international economic recession, the decline in commodity prices and financial flows, adverse terms of trade, increased protectionism and high interest rates, a heavy debt burden and debt servicing obligations have converged to worsen the economic situation in Africa. The international community in the UN-PAAERD agreed that an immediate task is to assist African Governemnts in their effort to restore productivity to appreciable levels in all sectors, but particularly so in the food and agriculture sector, and decided to "respond positively to the African call for a new era of co-operation based on a spirit of genuine and equal partnership which is an essential element for harmonious and and mutually beneficial economic co-operation in an interdependent world."2/

The UN-PAAERD is a programme of mutual commitment between Africa and the international community. This mutual commitment consists of two central elements:

"(a) The determination and commitment of the African countries to launch both national and regional programmes of economic development as reflected in Africa's Priority Programme for Economic recovery 1986-1990, adopted by the African Heads of State and Government in July 1985;

(b) The response of the international community and its commitment to support and complement the African development efforts."3/

1/ UN-PAAERD, P.3
2/ Ibid., P.4
3/ Ibid., P.5

On the basis of Africa's commitment, the international community agreed to improve the quality and modality of external assistance and co-operation. This would be achieved by placing greater emphasis on programme support in the areas of priority; improvement of the delivery of production inputs; speedier disbursement of funds; increasing concessional assistance, particularly the grant element; making greater use of local expertise, techniques and equipment and increasing training of local personnel; increased co-ordination of aid policies for greater effectiveness; increased assistance to meet recurrent and local costs of on-going and new projects.

In addition to these, the need was expressed for the external economic environment to be improved in favour of Africa's economic recovery and development. In this regard, it was agreed that donor countries should formulate trade expansion policies that would eliminate protectionism and lift non-tariff barriers so as to provide African products a breathing space in the world market; and make concessions in the interest of African countries in the concluding of commodity and compensatory financing agreements. The developed countries should also help African countries increase their capacity for processing, marketing, distributing and transporting their products.

Support is also to be given for implementation of the internal policy reforms proposed in APPER by the African Governments themselves. In this respect, the international community agreed to place greater emphasis on non-project aid, including the provision of balance-of-payments support and to provide aid on the basis of the specific requirements of African governments. They also agreed to increase the effectiveness of the IMF Structural Adjustment Facility, the International Development Association and the Fifth African Development Fund, in contributing to the implementation of APPER. They will also increase assistance to the droughtprone countries through multinational groupings such as the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel, and will increase assistance to the least developed countries for the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries.

The strengthening of South-South co-operation was also very strongly recommended in areas such as agricultural research, training, institution building, trade expansion etc.

Finally, a number of measures were agreed upon for monitoring the implementation of the UN-PAAERD and for appropriate reporting to the General Assembly on progress in this regard from 1987 to 1990. At the national level, it is recommended that committees or commissions be set up to coordinate and monitor the implementation of the programme.

In sum, APPER sets priorities among priorities and designs a strategy for meeting these priorities. The Submission presents these to the international community with a specific request for its support. UNPAAERD represents the "compact" agreed between the international community and African governments

on the matter of Africa's survival, economic recovery and development. Although the contributions of the international community are important for the implementation of Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery, it is obvious that APPER's success hinges on Africa's internal capabilities to transform the socio-economic structures that made the continent susceptible to the well-known debilitating economic conditions. Such transformation cannot be made for Africa by outsiders. It is Africans themselves who must develop the resolve to make the structural changes required to guarantee the continent's survival and development. What now should be the role of the institutions of higher learning in bringing about the changes required to guarantee economic recovery in Africa in the next five years?

C. THE ROLE OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

Africa's institutions of higher learning have a crucial role to play in ensuring the successful implementation of APPER and the UN-PAAERD and, as such, an urgent need exists for those institutions to critically examine their plans during the next five years with a view to determining how best they could support the programmes and the drive for structural transformation and policy reforms that African countries have to embark upon to achieve economic recovery and lay the foundations for self-sustained and accelerated development.

African Governments have undertaken to remove the internal constraints on their countries' development. In this they have made commitments to improve economic management, rationalize public investment policies, use resources with greater efficiency and discipline and ensure that the people participate effectively in development. They have also committed themselves to restructure their economies giving priority to food; revitalize other sectors in support of agriculture; develop human resources; and intensify the fight against drought and desertification. Institutions of higher learning in Africa can assist their Governemnts in meeting these objectives. In what follows, some ways in which this assistance can be provided are discussed.

(a) Better Management of the African Economies

At the root of the economic crisis which has given rise to the need for the Recovery Programme lies the serious decline of economic management capabilities in Africa. Planning capabilities have been severely weakened, financial management systems are almost in disarray in many an African country, human resources are poorly utilized and physical development resources are being left to rot. Unless the region's capabilities to manage the African economy with a high degree of efficiency are guaranteed, no attempts at recovery and rehabilitation and no amount of financial resources will put this continent on the path of self-reliant and self-sustained development. Strengthening economic management capabilities is, therefore, the essential springboard required to launch the African economy towards full recovery. In this respect,

universities and other institutions of higher learning must play an active role in spearheading research on development management, and conducting training programmes for practising planners and managers in all fields of economic management. "Classroom planning" theories must give way to homegrown planning techniques. Financial management must put weight on efficiency in mobilizing, conserving and optimizing resources; control and monitoring mechanisms must be rendered much more effective; and Africa's human resources must be made more effective in their contributions to growth and development.

Third level educational institutions must assist in unravelling the many causes of the decline in economic management within the region with a view to proposing the solutions required to make Africa better able to manage its resources towards the attainment of its development objectives.

The immediate need for the implementation of APPER is the mobilization of financial resources. African Governments have committed themselves to mobilizing US$9.12 billion domestically every year to implement their recovery programmes. They will have to rely not only on traditional sources of resource mobilization but also on new ones, and above all, would have to manage these resources in a way that will minimize waste and make them more productive. The institutions can assist their governments by proposing ways of mobilizing financial resources.

Financial resources utilization pre-supposes their having first been mobilized. The most common ways of mobilizing revenue are through trade, fiscal measures, and concessional and non-concessional international transfers. In Africa, however, one form of resource mobilizaiton that is usually not given much attention is the identification and blockage of channels through which there is an enormous leakage of foreign exchange. Through these leakages, billions of dollars are lost to the African economies every year.1/ Although merchandise trade accounts for a good part of financial leakages, certain practices unrelated to trade also contribute significantly. Among these, management services are a prime culprit. These services are delivered through consultancy services, technology transfer and training abroad. Very often, these services could have been provided locally at much lower costs to the receiving country. One might argue that they are normally imposed by donors as a condition of their assistance to development projects. If such were the case in the past, these same donor governments have not undertaken to make greater use of African expertise in their assistance packages.2/ Third-level educational institutions should now initiate the necessary action to seal off this source of capital flight from African economies.

The institutions should indicate their preparedness to provide consultancy services to governemnt, parastatal organizations and private enterprises. They

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1/See UNECA, "Report of the Second Workshop on Leakages in African Economies", Addis Ababa, 1984.

2/UN-PAAERD, op.cit.

should be prepared to release expertise from their normal teaching and research functions to assist their governments in crucial areas such as project design, pre-feasibility studies and project evaluation. Demand for these services is expected to be very high, if the amount of US$128 billion is to be absorbed during APPER's five-year life. So also are the chances that many more foreign experts will be imported to swell the ranks of Africa's estimated 40,000 foreign technical assistance personnel. The institutions must endeavour to identify the areas in which the use of management and other services is being anticipated with a view to offering their services and thus obviate the need for importing expertise with the foreign exchange leakages that are bound to result. One policy consideration that must be made by the institutions, involves the conditions under which their services would be provided. Third-level educational institutions have bemoaned the limited use to which they have been put in the provision of consultancy services. The opportunity now presents itself for them to gain the confidence of their prospective users by offering to contribute to their countries' recovery at little or no cost to their governments.

Tremendous financial leakages result from trade malpractices such as over-invoicing of imports and under-invoicing of exports. The former is estimated to have cost Nigeria some US$60 million and the latter about US$71 million in 1981.1/ Other countries in Africa also lose huge amounts in this way - resources which could have been put to productive use in development endeavours. The actions of multinationals and certain technology transfer practices also contribute a great deal to increasing the flight of capital from African countries. The time has come for African governments to have a better grasp of the way these vital development resources are squirelled from the continent, with a view to instituting measures to arrest the trend. Third-level educational institutions in Africa can assist their governemnts to block the many sources through which they lose capital. Institutions should consider launching a programme of research aimed at identifying sources of leakages in their countries so as to propose to their governments effective ways of stopping or reducing them, including mechanisms which may be put in place for that purpose.

A good amount of training abroad could be undertaken locally or elsewhere in Africa. There are adequate facilities for management training in most countries of the region. Teacher training can also be provided fairly satisfactorily. Training of paramedical staff should not present too great a difficulty. Technician and engineering training might be the only area with some shortcomings within the region. Yet African countries continue to spend resources, sometimes unjustifiably so, to send their nationals abroad for training. In 1982, the training "market" was estimated to be about US$5 billion worldwide. African countries, in that year spent US$1.4 billion approximately in that market. The task of the institutions of higher learning is to ascertain whether or not facilities existing in their countries could not be used to reduce the cost - both direct and indirect - of training abroad. They ought

1/ See ECA, op.cit. P.3.

to undertake a thorough study of existing training infrastructure in order to determine their capacity to provide the services sought after elsewhere, and with a view to taking measures to fill any identified gaps. They should also volunteer their advice to their governemnts on this very important source of financial leakage.

Although the top-most priority area in the use of available resources for the priority programme, is financial, there are other productive resources whose utilization must be optimized. In Africa, to-day, socio-economic decay can commonly be seen with the naked eye. Public infrastructures such as roads, public buildings etc. are, as it were, left to seed; educational and human resources are underutilized; and transport and communications systems are in decline. These are all valuable resource whose optimality will in turn create more resources. How they can be more effectively utilized for that purpose is a question institutions of higher learning should answer for the benefit of those formulating and implementing national priority programmes.

(b) <u>According Priority to the Agricultural Sector</u>

APPER reiterates the need for African agriculture to emerge as the motor of development and the catalyst for stimulating growth, in all other sectors.

For the agricultural sector to serve as the centre of sectoral linkages, its current levels of productivity must be increased significantly. In fact Africa's survival requires it even more so. Institutions of higher learning in Africa can assist African governemnts achieve this primordial objective by helping the African regain control over his physical environment. Simple production implements and tools need to be produced to assist the farmer achieve higher levels of productivity. While in the long run, the institutions in concert with industry must help create capabilities for heavy agricultural equipment to be produced within this region, in the medium-term, third-level educational institutions must contribute to meeting the immediate production requirement of the African farmer. This requires that simple production tools and implements which are aleady in use should be improved for greater efficiency and that ways ought to be found to develop from within the rural environment, new and simple agricultural production technologies that would benefit the farmer. The proposal is that third-level educational institutions should show inventiveness in coming to the assistance of the African farmer to meet his day-to-day production needs.

The development and greater utilization of local factor inputs in production serves to reduce the region's dependence on others for the provision of these inputs, and stimulates internal economic demand. Its net effect is to reduce the need for imports thereby also reducing foreign exchange requirements. Universities and other third-level educational institutions can, through a vigorous programme of R & D in science and technology, reduce the region's dependence on imports for the provision of production inputs. Factor inputs

from outside the African economies must be substituted with those from within, and attitudes would have to be changed so that consumption patterns favour the local production of goods and services. This demands the gradual stimulation of indigeneous capacities to produce local agro-industrial goods for time and energy saving purposes and to enhance greater productivity. A great deal of work in industrial, scientific and technological R & D would be required. In the main, third-level educational institutions are for the moment, the centre from which capabilities could be harnessed to undertake research, design and build prototypes before handing over to industry for production and marketing. In addition, there is need for the institutions to look around them and propose how what surrounds the African can be used to produce a wide range of goods such as fertilizers, pesticides, pharmaceuticals, cheap forms of energy such as biomass and solar energy etc.

Drought and desertification are two scourges that threaten Africa's agricultural development. Apart from measures to stimulate agriculture and food production, it is necessary also to direct attention to the control of desertification and drought within the continent as an equally important strategy for agricultural development. Third-level educational institutions should intensify their programmes of research and teaching in range management, deforestation, overgrazing and the effects of certain cropping practices on climate and soil fertility; the exploitation, conservation, control and utilization of water resources. They should also increase their contributions to the strengthening of Africa's hydrological data base and the development of effective early warning and crop forecasting systems.

(c) Africa's External Debt Problem

By the end of 1986, Africa's total external debt was estimated at close to US$200 billion representing close to 50 per cent of regional GDP and more than 190 per cent of the value of exports. Debt servicing obligations during the life of APPER will extract from African countries between US$14.6 and US$24.5 billion annually, up from only US$4.3 billion between 1980 and 1982. This dramatic increase in Africa's external debt and debt servicing obligations will doubtless make efforts to achieve full recovery in the five years from 1986 to 1990 more difficult. While measures to alleviate Africa's debt burden can only be implemented with the assistance and the good
will of the international community, African countries themselves should evolve a set of measures to reduce debt without having to divert resources from priority development areas. This requires policies to ensure that frugality prevails, and calls for an efficient system of debt management. Public financial management practices would need to be innovative and to develop new sets of skills to control debt within the region.

Institutions of higher learning have a role to play in assisting in this regard. There is need to first understand what went wrong with Africa's borrowing practices in the past with a view to proposing ways of avoiding such repetitions in the future. There is also ned to create mechanisms to control

borrowing and monitor debt and debt servicing. The institutions should thus embark on a programme of studies aimed at gaining a much better understanding of the debt problem, in order to recommend to their governemnts, measures that would alleviate it in favour of Africa's rapid economic recovery. They should also design and execute short courses for Africa's financial managers, particularly those who are more directly involved in executing borrowing and debt repayment policies, to increase the efficiency of control measures which Africa's heavy debt burden demands.

Uncontrolled borrowing is a function of inefficiency in planning in the first place. Therefore, while planning capabilities ought to be improved for overall social and economic growth to be accelerated, they also have, in the short and medium terms to be developed so that African countries are able to avoid the rampant and unco-ordinated borrowing practices in the past. Africa's institutions of higher learning should bring their expertise in this field to the service of their Governments. They should also make a thorough review of the lending policies and objectives of the major financial and banking institutions, vis-a-vis their real impact on Africa's long term economic and, especially, social development interests.

(d) Involving the People in the Development Process

The institutions of higher learning must be more involved in helping their communities find the right solutions to their day-to-day social and economic problems. In the past, disadvantaged communities in Africa's rural areas and urban informal sectors have been of interest to Africa's educational institutions mostly as guinea pigs on whom western development theories can be tested. Research on these communities has largely been designed to serve academic ends, and has contributed little to furthering the well-being of those within them. Yet these are the people who bear the full brunt of the effects of Africa's economic crisis and who require assistance the most, to cope with the problem of survival from day to day.

If universities and other third-level educational institutions intend to show concern for Africa's downtrodden, they should now begin to design a programme of action to help the poor tackle their health and nutritional problems; their fight against a deteriorating physical environemnt; and the constraints on their full development as people, imposed by ignorance and illiteracy. University extension services must now be truly community development-oriented. They must be multi-disciplinary, problem-solving and down-to-earth in their programme activities. This is the way institutions of higher learning can help equip Africa's disadvantaged with the capabilities to participate more fully in development policy making and implementation.

In addition, third level educational instituions should draw more from the communities that surround them, lessons about Africa's development problems that would be of use in teaching, learning and research. Unless this is done, Africa's institutions of higher learning will continue to produce intelligent and highly-qualified men and women who are poorly equipped to understand and grapple with the day-to-day problems of underdevelopment that surround them.

D. THIRD LEVEL EDUCATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF APPER

Emergencies demand that things be done differently. Like governments, institutions of higher learning in Africa must take on new forms of behaviour if they wish to make contributions to Africa's short and medium-term needs for recovery. To prepare themselves to make these contributions, the institutions would have to evolve a new set of policies and establish new mechanisms for their implementation. They would also have to be most innovative in the ways they choose to motivate the agents whose responsibility it would be to implement the new policies. In this regard, a few courses of action are proposed in what follows, for consideration.

(a) Training for Recovery and Development

"Education", the primary goal of educational institutions, is aimed at the long-term development of the individual's skills, knowledge and attitudes to enable him make contributions to his society's social, economic, political and cultural development. The goals of "training" are to develop an individual's skills, knowledge and attitudes so that he can perform specific tasks more efficiently. Thus while education would have a long time-horizon (five years and more) training would have medium and short-term learning objectives. Therefore, learning policies in third-level educational institutions would need to be altered to de-emphasize "education" in favour of "training" if these institutions should contribute their share in the implementation of Africa's priority programme, whose time-frame is only five years. This is not meant to suggest that traditional learning and research activities of third-level educational educational institutions should be abandoned and that training activities be concentrated on entirely. Rather, what is required is that third-level educational institutions should put more effort into training in specific identified areas of relevance to the implementation of APPER. A programme of "crash courses" could be designed to help in various areas of economic management whose strengthening is vital for the recovery programme. Special short courses could be designed for key agents in agriculture to help develop water resources, install small irrigation systems, undertake afforestation and re-afforestation schemes etc.

(b) Research in the Service of APPER

The value of research in third-level educational institutions, has traditionally, been judged by its contribution to the build-up of knowledge. While educational institutions ought to abide by their traditions, they must also be mindful of their obligation to make research serve the needs of the community. If African governments have, in the past, not shown much interest in funding research, it may be because they have not been convinced of its functionality in development. Governments now have to implement a recovery programme. They will have to harness all the capabilities available to them

for success to be assured. Research is the pathfinder Africa requires most to guide its decisions on how to invest its meagre resources for recovery and development. Third-level educational institutions now have to be cognizant of this fact and formulate research policies and programmes specifically for the needs of Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery. This should be considered as an added function which the institutions have assumed specifically to respond to the present emergency. The research programme should draw from all possible sources for funding - government, the private sector and international donors. It should be different from traditional research in that it should not be motivated by the need to publish, but by its practical value to APPER. The uses to which it will be put should be determined beforehand. Research projects should not be allowed to last more than twenty-four months.

(c) Mechanisms for a Continuous Dialogue with Government

Although the priorities of the Recovery Programme are well known, implementing them from day to day will certainly be accompanied by changes and adjustments as problems surface and strategies have to be altered. Because of the importance of the role which the institutions have assumed in the Recovery Programme, they must enter into greater consultation with their governments to guide and be guided, and to participate actively in monitoring progress. In this respect, the institutions of higher learning may wish to consider proposing to their governemnts, the creation of a national institution/government mechanism to monitor and review the implementation of APPER on a regular basis. This would afford both parties the opportunity to promptly identify bottlenecks and emerging problems and respond quickly to them.

E. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Africa's institutions of higher learning have an important role to play in steering the economies of their countries towards full recovery in the short and medium terms, and development in the long run. It is incumbent upon them to define how individually and collectively, through the AAU and its subsidiary bodies, they can fulfil that role. The following is recommended for consideration:

(a) At the National Level

(i) National institutions should draw up a programme of research to respond to the specific areas of priority identified by their governments to implement national recovery programmes. This may include research in resource mobilization and conservation, including measures to reduce financial leakages; research on various aspects of agricultural development including food production, distribution and marketing; the production of drought-resistant and high-yielding seeds, soil conservation, water resources etc.; agro-industrial R & D for the production of agricultural tools and equipment, pesticides and fertilizers, medicines, etc.

(ii) The institutions should develop a "Training for Recovery Programme" throughout the life of APPER to provide short, day-release, weekend and vacation courses for public officials and managers of state-owned enterprises in areas such as debt management, aid management, financial and general economic management, project planning etc.

(iii) Since it is anticipated that the demand for consultancy services will increase during the implementation of APPER, the institutions should consider establishing Consultancy Bureaux where none so far exist, to enable the institutions cope with the large amount of requests for these services that should be expected within the next five years.

(iv) It has already been proposed that the criteria for the selection of research proposals for funding should be their relevance to APPER. Since this may not be consistent with the "publish-or-perish" syndrome which governs staff advancement, it is recommended that in order to encourage researchers, trainers and consultants combine their career growth needs with the needs of APPER, a "points system" be evolved through which "points" are awarded to staff for each "non-academic" activity undertaken in support of the priority programme. These points would substitute for credit gained for research and publication.

(v) The institutions should increase public awareness of the African social and economic crisis, its causes and the short-, medium- and long-term solutions prescribed in APPER, the Submission, UN-PAAERD and the Lagos Plan of Aciton, through the conduct of seminars and conferences and the delivery of lectures to public servants, businessmen and students. This is important if the gravity of Africa's predicament is to be fully appreciated and if attitudes are to change in favour of Africa's recovery and development.

(vi) National institutions should initiate action with their governments to set up mechanisms for a continuous dialogue between the institutions and government on the implementation of programmes of recovery, and to review the contributions of the institutions to the national effort.

(b) <u>At the Sub-Regional Level</u>

(i) Institutions in the various subregions should agree on measures to contribute to the solution of common problems constraining the recovery and development of countries in their subregions. Institutions in the Sahel and in North Africa may focus on the problems of drought and descrtification; those in Southern Africa and their impact on development; and the island nations of East Africa on how to promote a greater degree of integration with mainland Africa.

(ii) The institutions should determine how, on a subregional basis they can establish a forum to exchange ideas and work out strategies for formulating common research and training programmes and place more of their teaching facilities and expertise at the common use of all

(c) At the Regional Level

(i) Just as governments have formulated incentives schemes to motivate the direct producer towards higher levels of productivity, so also should institutions of higher learning in Africa come up with their own set of incentives to motivate their agents towards making meaningful contributions to the implementation of APPER. In this regard, it is recommended that an "Africa Prize" be awarded each year to the individual or individuals who have made the most valuable contributions to the implementation of the Recovery Programme. A similar commendation - "The Universities Award" - should go to the institution in which the individual worked. The AAU may be requested to establish the mechanism and define the modalities through which this recommendation may be implemented.

(ii) The Second Conference of Vice-Chancellors, Presidents and Rectors of Institutions of Higher Learning in Africa which was held in Mbabane, Swaziland from 18-22 February 1986, decided to set up panels to appraise teaching and research capabiltiies and capacities in African universities with a view to identifying potential centres of excellence for the development of research and learning programmes for use region-wide in the crucial areas of water resoruces, food research, irrigation science and engineering, hydrology, farm tools research and development, meteorology, drought and desertificaiton research, veterinary science and medicine. The need for Africa's economic recovery and the crucial role the institutions must assume in the implementation of APPER demand that those panels be established and put to work with the minimum possible delay. The AAU and ECA may be requested to finalize the modalities required to implement this recommendation.

(iii) The Vice-Chancellors, Presidents and Rectors of Instituions of Higher Learning in Africa had also recommended the setting up of working groups to propose a set of new contents of undergraduate textbooks and syullabi in the social sciences and to identify chapter and book authors. The important subject areas of development economics, social development, political science and development administration and management were singled out for initial action. This recommendation should also be implemented and the AAU in collaboration with ECA should be mandated to act accordingly.

(iv) An annual report on the activities of the institutions in support of APPER should be prepared by the AAU and circulated to all African institutions of higher learning, all African governments, the ECA and the OAU.

F. CONCLUSION

The social and economic crisis in Africa, which was the subject of the Second Conference of Vice-Chancellors, Presidents and Rectors of Institutions of Higher Learning in Africa, is only now abating, but has left the African economy so debilitated that unless it is rehabilitated in the short and medium terms, Africa's long-term development as prescribed in the Lagos Plan of Aciton and the Final Act of Lagos will be severely delayed. The African Heads of State and Government, in recognition of this fact, have identified a new set of priorities which would ensure Africa's total economic recovery and better preparedness to move towards the attainment of its long-term development objectives. They have recognized further that Africa cannot by itself undertake all that is necessary to implement the recovery programme, and have decided to seek the assistance of the international communty. The international community have accepted not only Africa's perception of the causes of its problems, but also the measures proposed to solve them. They have thus entered into a "compact" with Africa through which they have agreed to assist the continent in implementing the recovery and development programme in the ways and manner chosen by African govenrments themselves.

All agents within the African economy will have to define for themselves a role in the implementation of Africa's recovery programme. The governments have said clearly what they intend to do; financial institutions have made known what their contributions would be; in some countries the parastatals have also made their declaration on the part they hope to play in the recovery programmes. It is now up to the institutons of higher learning to decide how the tremendous teaching and research capabilities within them can be put to use in Africa's eocnomic recovery for development.

A set of measures have been proposed whose implementation would require that the institutions depart, at least temporarily, from their traditional functions. Another set of measures calls only for these traditional functions to be geared to meet the specific needs of Africa's recovery programme. Action must be undertaken at both the national and the regional levels, and monitoring and reporting on progress made is essential.

Sacrifices will also have to be made, and the instituitons should see these sacrifices as being an essential part of their contribution to Africa's survival. They should also motivate their agents to work selflessly and efficiently to provide the services which only educational instituitons are equipped to provide, towards achieving the full eocnomic recovery of this continent.